

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 OMB-01

MC-02 EB-07 /099 W

----- 096580

P R 111018Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6274

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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PLS PASS TO AMB KEATING

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, EG, US

SUBJ: PERES ISSUES WARNING TO EGYPTIANS

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. WE WISH TO CALL DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO FOLLOWING
REMARKS MADE BY DEFENSE MINISTER PERES APRIL 9 ON TIMING
OF NEXT DECISIVE STAGE IN EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS AND
IMPLICATIONS OF OPENING OF SUEZ CANAL. EXCERPTS ARE FROM
OFFICIAL GOI TEXT.

2. QUOTE. THE COMING SUMMER MONTHS WILL BE DECISIVE.
EGYPT IS BOUND TO RETAIN BOTH HER OPTIONS--THE OPTION OF
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DEVELOPEMENT WITHOUT BELLIGERENCY, AND THAT OF BELLIGERENCY

ITSELF. SHOULD SHE INDEED OPEN THE CANAL AND NOT VIOLATE THE AGREEMENT ALREADY ATTAINED, AN OPEN-MINDED SITUATION WILL BE CREATED ON THE MIDDLE EAST ALLOWING FOR THE CONTINUED EXPLORATION OF POSSIBILITIES FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CONFLICT. AS TO WHERE THIS SHOULD BE DONE--IN EUROPE, THE US OR THE MIDDLE EAST--THAT IS MORE A QUESTION OF LOCATION THAN OF CONTENT. SHOULD SHE VIOLATE THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT UNDER THE PRETEXT OF HAVING TO DO SO FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPENING THE CANAL--WHOSE OPENING NO ONE ENDANGERS--THE HOSTILE TEMPERATURE WILL AGAIN RISE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND SHE WILL DISCOVER A FULLY ALERT AND DULY PREPARED ISRAEL. END QUOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED

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3. SEVERAL ISRAELIS WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED THESE REMARKS HAVE INTERPRETED THEM AS CLEAR WARNING TO SADAT NOT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPENING OF SUEZ CANAL TO MOVE WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT ACROSS SUEZ CANAL IN VIOLATION OF TERMS OF DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. UTILIZATION OF CANAL FOR PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF AREA AS OPPOSED TO USING IT FOR INCREASING EGYPTIAN MILITARY PREPARATIONS, WOULD BE READ HERE AS IMPORTANT SIGN OF DIRECTION IN WHICH EGYPT WAS MOVING.

4. COMMENTATORS ALSO HAVE NOTED THAT PERES' REMARKS INDICATE THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT AT THIS STAGE EXPECT SHARP INCREASE IN MILITARY TENSIONS IN NEXT HUNDRED DAYS, AND THAT IT BELIEVES THAT BOTH SIDES ARE PREPARED TO UTILIZE THIS TIME FRAME FOR ACTIVE EXPLORATIONS OF PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. DANGER POINT, HOWEVER, COULD ARISE IF POLITICAL SITUATION REMAINED STALEMATED WHEN THREE MONTH UNEF MANDATE EXTENSION WOULD RUN OUT ON JULY 24.

5. HAARETZ MILITARY CORRESPONDENT ZEV SCHIFF IN APRIL 10 ARTICLE ENTITLED "ISRAEL'S CANAL DILEMMA" COMMENTS ON POLITICAL/MILITARY PROBLEM WHICH WOULD CONFRONT ISRAEL SHOULD EGYPT EXPLOIT OPENING OF CANAL TO MOVE TROOPS INTO SINAI. SCHIFF SPECULATES THAT SADAT WOULD JUSTIFY SUCH ACTION, IF TAKEN, BY CLAIMING THAT THESE TROOPS WOULD BE DEFENDING CIVILIAN PROJECTS ON CANAL INVOLVING POLITICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO MANY NATIONS. ISRAEL'S PROBLEM THEN WOULD BE HOW TO RESPOND TO VIOLATION OF DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND HOW TO EXPLAIN ITS RESPONSE TO WASHINGTON. IF IDF OPENED FIRE ON EGYPTIANS, ISRAEL WOULD BE ACCUSED OF DELIBERATELY CLOSING CANAL. WHILE WASHINGTON WOULD PROBABLY AGREE THAT EGYPTIANS HAD VIOLATED DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, SCHIFF WRITES, IT IS DOUBTFUL IF IT WOULD SUPPORT AN ISRAELI MILITARY RESPONSE. ARTICLE URGES

ADVANCE GOI-USG CONSULTATION ON THIS MATTER, AS WELL AS
FULL CABINET EXAMINATION OF AVAILABLE OPTIONS. END LIMITED
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DOZIER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED AMB KEATING.

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